



**IRCA**

INTERNATIONAL  
REGISTER OF  
CERTIFICATED  
AUDITORS



Certification criteria for

**Business Continuity Management Systems  
Auditor/Lead Auditor Training Course**



CERTIFICATION CRITERIA FOR THE

**BUSINESS CONTINUITY MANAGEMENT  
SYSTEMS (BCMS) AUDITOR/LEAD  
AUDITOR  
TRAINING COURSE**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 We, the International Register of Certificated Auditors (IRCA), have prepared these criteria to help you, the approved training organisation, to achieve certification of a **Business Continuity Management Systems (BCMS) Auditor/Lead Auditor** training course.
- 1.2 Before designing a BCMS Auditor/Lead Auditor training course to meet the requirements of this document, you should consider the following:

### 1.2.1 Aim of this course

The aim of this course is to provide students with the knowledge and skills required to perform first, second and third-party audits of business continuity management systems against ISO 22301, in accordance with ISO 19011 and ISO 17021, as applicable. All references in this document to ISO standards are to the current versions unless otherwise stated.

### 1.2.2 BCMS auditor certification

Students who successfully complete this BCMS Auditor/Lead Auditor course (within the three years prior to making an application to become a certificated auditor) will satisfy the training requirements for initial certification as an IRCA BCMS auditor.

### 1.2.3 Prior knowledge

Before starting this course, you must inform students that they are expected to have the following prior knowledge:

- a) Knowledge of the requirements of ISO 22301
- b) Knowledge of the following business continuity management principles and concepts:
  - The purpose and benefits of a business impact analysis
  - The principals of risk assessment and analysis
  - Typical business continuity strategies
  - Business continuity response options
  - BCMS performance metrics, monitoring and performance measurement
  - Exercise and testing methodologies

### 1.2.4 Flexibility in course design

These criteria specify the requirements for training courses, including the knowledge and skills to be covered during the course. Your training course must be designed and delivered in accordance with these criteria, although you may exercise flexibility in the inclusion of additional material, and in the structure and selection of specific training methods used during the course. Many of the certification requirements common to the management and control of courses are detailed in IRCA/2000, *Requirements for Training Organisation Approval*. These requirements are in addition to the requirements of this document and are mandatory. It is essential, therefore, that you are familiar with the requirements of IRCA/2000.

### 1.2.5 Training vs assessment

There must be two distinct aspects to courses based on these criteria:

- a) Effective training to help students develop the knowledge and skills defined in this document
- b) Effective assessment of each individual student's achievement of the knowledge and skills-learning objectives through objective testing based on defined outputs.

### 1.2.6 Training methods

This course may be designed to be presented in a variety of ways:

- a) Classroom-based over five days full-time (ie over five consecutive working days)
- b) Classroom-based as a series of part-time modules over a longer period
- c) Blended as a combination of self-study (ie e-learning course, correspondence course etc) and classroom-based learning.

However it is designed, students must complete the whole course of study with your organisation. (Note: we will not accept courses that are wholly based on self-study learning.)

## 2. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 Learning objectives describe in outline what students will know and be able to do by the end of the course. On completion, successful students will have the **knowledge** and **skills** to:

### Knowledge

- 2.1.1 Describe the purpose of a business continuity management system, of business continuity management systems standards, of management system audit and of third-party certification (see 3.1).
- 2.1.2 Explain the role of an auditor to plan, conduct, report and follow up a business continuity management system audit in accordance with ISO 19011 (and ISO 17021 where appropriate – see 3.2).

### Skills

- 2.1.3 Plan, conduct, report and follow up an audit of a business continuity management system to establish conformity (or otherwise) with ISO 22301 and in accordance with ISO 19011 (and ISO 17021 where appropriate – see 3.3).

## 3. ENABLING OBJECTIVES – KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS

In order for students to achieve the overall learning objectives, they will need to acquire and develop specific **knowledge** and **skills**. These are specified below as 'enabling objectives' and can be considered as steps to the achievement of learning objectives.

- 3.1 **Describe the purpose of a business continuity management system, of business continuity management systems standards, of management system audit and of third-party certification**

### Knowledge

- 3.1.1 Explain the purpose and business benefits of a business continuity management system.
- 3.1.2 With regard to ISO 22301:
  - a) Explain the Plan-Do-Check-Act framework and its application to business continuity management processes
  - b) Outline the processes involved in establishing, implementing, operating, monitoring, reviewing, maintaining and improving a business continuity management system, including the significance of these for BCMS auditors
  - c) Explain the terminology defined in the standard
  - d) State requirements for BCMS documentation, and explain the difference between documents and documented procedures.

- 3.1.3 Explain the purpose of and differences between first-party, second-party and third-party certification audit of management systems, including the role of the BCMS auditor in assessing an organisation's capability to protect against, reduce the likelihood of occurrence of, prepare for, respond to and recover from disruptive incidents when they arise.
- 3.1.4 Explain the benefits of third-party accredited certification of business continuity management systems for organisations and stakeholders.

3.2 **Explain the role of an auditor to plan, conduct, report and follow up a business continuity management system audit in accordance with ISO 19011 (and ISO 17021 where appropriate)**

**Knowledge**

3.2.1 **Audit process**

Explain the audit process, making reference to similarities and differences in the process between first-party, second-party and third-party certification audit, including:

- a) Determining audit objectives, the purpose and significance of the audit scope and criteria
- b) Resourcing the audit, the importance of auditor and team competency and the selection of team members, particularly with regard to knowledge of the relevant industry, regulations and legislation, and auditor training
- c) The purpose of a stage 1 audit, including the documentation review, and describe a typical stage 1 audit process and outputs
- d) Preparing for a stage 2 audit, including preparing an audit plan
- e) Conducting on-site audit activities, including preparing working documents, conducting audit meetings, gathering audit evidence, preparing and approving and distributing the audit report, and conducting the audit follow up.

3.2.2 **Auditor responsibilities**

- a) Describe the roles and responsibilities of the audit client, auditors, lead auditors, auditees, guides and observers
- b) Explain the management responsibilities of the lead auditor in managing the audit and the audit team
- c) Explain the need for effective communication with the auditee throughout the audit process
- d) Explain the need for auditor confidentiality
- e) Outline the content and intent of the IRCA code of conduct.

3.3 **Plan, conduct, report and follow up an audit of a business continuity management system to establish conformity (or otherwise) with ISO 22301 and in accordance with ISO 19011 (and ISO 17021 where appropriate)**

**Skills (to be practised and tested through tasks and in real or simulated audit situations – see Appendix 1)**

3.3.1 **Planning the audit**

- a) Establish that the scope, objectives, criteria, duration and resources for an audit are appropriate
- b) Prepare an on-site audit plan that is appropriate to the above and the organisation's context and processes
- c) Perform document review in preparation for the audit and prepare the necessary work documents, such as an audit checklist, sampling plan and forms.

3.3.2 **Conducting the audit**

- a) Demonstrate the ability to manage meetings effectively
- b) Demonstrate the ability to implement the audit plan, use work documents and to follow audit trails
- c) Demonstrate the ability to build rapport with the auditee during the audit, including sensitivity to the needs and expectations of the auditee
- d) Demonstrate the ability to manage audit interviews effectively, including the ability to formulate effective audit questions
- e) Demonstrate the ability to collect and verify appropriate audit evidence, including appropriate sampling (see 3.3.3).

3.3.3 **Auditing business continuity management system requirements (see Appendix 1)**

- a) Evaluate the auditee's business continuity management **policy and objectives**, as established by management to reflect the nature and scale of the organisation; how successfully they are communicated by management; and that responsibility and authority for achieving policy and objectives has been established through adequately competent resources
- b) Evaluate the auditee's **business impact analysis (BIA)**, including:
  - The importance of top management support and its role in the BIA process
  - The identification of various methods of collecting BIA information and selecting the best option for the organisation
  - Determining the activities carried out to support the delivery of products and services
  - Understanding how time will impact the organisation's ability to recover if certain activities cannot be resumed within predetermined timescales
  - Methods of prioritising activities to ensure timely reinstatement
  - Identifying the dependency on activities and resources including those provided by suppliers and other interested parties
  - Determining minimum recovery timeframes, and the timeframe by which not resuming activities would impact the organisation to an unacceptable degree
- c) Review the methodology of the auditee's **risk assessment**, taking into account its stated risk appetite
- d) Review the auditee's **business continuity strategies**, including the effectiveness of the methods to determine and apply these
- e) Evaluate the effectiveness of **business continuity plans** in meeting business continuity objectives
- f) Verify that **business continuity objectives** link to the business continuity policy, legal and other business requirements, and the priorities established in the BIA
- g) Verify that the **exercises and tests** are consistent with the business continuity objectives and together validate the entire business continuity arrangements
- h) Review arrangements for **monitoring and measuring** significant business continuity management system performance against policy and objectives, including requirements for internal audit
- i) Evaluate the process of **management review** of the business continuity policy and objectives based on measurement, analysis and improvement data, including audit outcomes, and outcomes which make improvements as required to policy, objectives, measures or the management system
- j) Evaluate capability for **continual improvement**, including the effectiveness of identifying, and methods for correcting nonconformities and addressing adverse trends or results before nonconformity exists
- k) Evaluate **management commitment** to the BCMS.

3.3.4 **Generating audit findings**

- a) Demonstrate the ability to evaluate audit evidence to identify correctly conformity and nonconformity with requirements
- b) Demonstrate the ability to prepare audit conclusions, including the extent of conformity of the management system, identification of positive audit findings in addition to nonconformity, and identification of potential risks and opportunities for improvement.

3.3.5 **Reporting the audit**

- a) Write and grade nonconformity reports correctly
- b) Present audit conclusions and recommendations clearly to the auditee at a closing meeting.

3.3.6 **Following up the audit**

Evaluate proposals for corrective action and differentiate between correction and corrective action.

**4. TRAINING METHODS**

4.1 Your course may be presented as a wholly classroom-based course or as a blended course (in other words, part self-study and part classroom-based). You may also present the course as a series of separate modules, either as full-time or part-time study.

4.2 Courses for management system disciplines where observation is an essential audit method must include images (photographs and/or video) to support and provide contexts for learning points. For example, environmental management, occupational health and safety management, and social systems auditing should include images showing a variety of facilities (factories, sites, farms, etc) that auditors may be faced with, as well as a variety of issues that the auditor may face (health, safety, work activities and environment, etc).

4.3 **Classroom-based training**

4.3.1 You must provide students with **an environment conducive to effective learning**. At the beginning of the course, you must provide the students with a description of the learning objectives, course structure, format and programme, student responsibilities, the assessment processes and assessment criteria, and you must also deal with any concerns or worries that students may have.

4.3.2 Your course must be based on the **learning cycle** (see guidance in Appendix 2) and include opportunities for students to:

- a) Experience new ideas and skills. (Note: tutor-led slide presentations as a sole method to help students learn new knowledge is not acceptable)
- b) Reflect on their learning and identify strengths and weaknesses. (Note: your course must include methods for monitoring and providing time for tutors and students to review tasks and activities, and each student's achievement of the learning objectives)
- c) Address and improve on areas of weakness. (Note: your course must include provision for review and remedial work, and individual coaching where necessary.)

4.3.3 Your course must include a **variety of learning methods** to suit the range of learning styles (see guidance in Appendix 2).

4.3.4 Your course must not rely on tutor presentations and tutor-led discussions to achieve **knowledge-based learning objectives**. We expect to see students learning these elements mostly through a process that requires them to complete a task or activity, often in teams, and to produce a defined output.

- 4.3.5 All students must practise the **skills-based learning objectives** of the course (learning objective 2.1.3) through participation in appropriate tasks and activities (role play, simulation etc).
- 4.3.6 Where IT systems and IT-based documents and records are to be used by students during tasks and activities, training organisations shall ensure alternative arrangements are in place in case these IT systems are not available for any reason.
- 4.3.7 Where training makes use of IT systems, and IT-based documents and records in tasks and activities, the training organisation shall ensure students have the necessary IT skills to use the systems provided. Simulated audits employing IT systems, IT-based documents and records shall not rely upon the tutor to lead and direct students, and shall not unduly inhibit sampling and evaluation by the student. (Note: training organisations may reasonably expect all students to have the basic IT skills necessary to access documents in MS Word, Excel and Adobe formats.)
- 4.3.8 Timekeeping, planning and programme management are essential elements in the performance of an audit and, although we recognise that effective training is responsive to students' needs, deviations from the timetable must be managed so that all learning objectives are adequately covered and students are kept informed of significant changes to the programme.
- 4.3.9 You must submit **session plans** or tutor notes for each individual training session. Session plans must specify:
- a) Learning objectives and duration of the session
  - b) An outline, or reference to, the content of the session sufficient to achieve the learning objectives and consistency between tutors
  - c) Descriptions of the training method(s) sufficient to ensure tutors apply a clearly-structured learning process
  - d) Training aids, exercises, case studies and other activities designed to involve and engage students and enhance participation, or make reference to them
  - e) A description of any activities, their purpose and intended output, or reference to other documents containing this information, for example: exercise briefs
  - f) Where training methods or use of exercises etc are optional, this must be clearly indicated in session plans
  - g) Student evaluation methods that specify how each learning objective will be assessed and, where applicable, include documented criteria with performance standards for successful completion of the course, or reference to them.
- 4.4 **Blended courses** (a combination of self-study, including electronic media and classroom-based learning)
- 4.4.1 Only knowledge-based learning objectives 2.1.1 and 2.1.2 may be covered by self-study methods.
- 4.4.2 Skills-based learning objective 2.1.3 must be completed in a classroom environment in terms of practice and student assessment. See clause 4.2 of this document for requirements for the classroom element of blended learning courses.
- 4.4.3 Training methods selected should seek to involve and engage students throughout the duration of the course. Simply providing students with a set of reading materials will not be acceptable. Your self-study materials must be designed around a clearly-structured learning process, with:
- a) Theory
  - b) Examples (scenarios, case studies etc)

- c) Practice (activities, case studies, progress tests, etc)
  - d) Feedback/self-assessment on activities and tests where relevant, to ensure students can self-assess their understanding and achievement of the learning objectives, and identify any areas requiring further work.
- 4.4.4 Self-study course materials must be clearly presented and structured for ease of use, with appropriate navigational aids. You must make the following clear to students to help them manage their learning:
- a) The learning objectives for the overall self-study element of the course
  - b) The learning objectives for each section within the course
  - c) How the self-study element of the course links with the classroom component
  - d) The structure and suggested or intended sequence of the materials
  - e) Instructions for the students' use of the materials, including realistic timescales
  - f) Examples of typical documents, reports, forms, etc
  - g) How, when and how often students may contact tutors for help, guidance and feedback
  - h) Methods for students to assess their learning and to seek timely feedback and coaching from the tutor(s).
- 4.4.5 You must ensure that each student has timely access to a course tutor to answer questions and queries. (Note: as a guide, a response to communications from students within 24 hours would be acceptable.

## 5. COURSE CONTENT

- 5.1 At the beginning of the course presentation, you must provide the students with a description of the learning objectives, course format and programme, student responsibilities, and student evaluation processes and criteria.
- 5.2 You must ensure students secure a copy of ISO 22301 or you must provide them with a copy for self-study (if relevant) and for classroom-based elements of the course.
- 5.3 The course must cover:
  - 5.3.1 All aspects defined in clause 2 learning objectives and amplified in clause 3 enabling objectives.
  - 5.3.2 Local requirements, culture, practices or approaches to auditing, and the application of ISO 22301 as appropriate for each country in which the course is presented.
- 5.4 The course must cover the benefits of certification as an BCMS auditor, including brief details of the IRCA BCMS auditor certification scheme, and provide students with details of how to contact IRCA and apply for certification (you may use IRCA/190 and IRCA/167 or equivalent for this).

## 6. COURSE DURATION

- 6.1 **Classroom-based learning**
  - 6.1.1 Where the course is wholly classroom-based, the total course must be at least 40 hours in total, calculated as detailed in IRCA/2000.
  - 6.1.2 This course may be presented over a minimum of five consecutive days full-time, or over a maximum of eight weeks on a part-time (modular) basis. (Note: although not mandatory, we recommend that this course be residential if presented over five consecutive days.)

## 6.2 Blended learning

- 6.2.1 Elements of the courses that are delivered through self-study will allow students three times longer than classroom training (ie approximately 80 hours for learning objectives 2.1.1 and 2.1.2).
- 6.2.2 The classroom element (ie the skills-learning objective 2.1.3 as a minimum) must be timed to allow each student to practise and be assessed on the skills-learning objective. The amount of time given to this classroom element will depend on the learning objectives being covered, normally however, 60% (three days, or 24 hours gross as calculated in IRCA/2000) duration will be devoted to classroom-based learning and assessment. Courses with a reduction in classroom time may be allowed if agreed in advance with IRCA. See Appendix 2 for guidance on instances where reduced classroom time may be allowed.
- 6.2.3 Each student must complete both the self-study and the classroom part of the training course in no more than 90 days.
- 6.2.4 Students must complete each element of blended courses in the correct sequence. For example, on courses where a self-study element is followed by a classroom element, the training organisation must ensure that students who do not complete the self-study element of the course are not accepted onto the classroom-based element. You must have a process for recording and validating each student's completion of each element of blended courses, to ensure the course is completed in the correct order.

## 6.3 Translators

If the course is given through translators, the time must be increased by as much as is necessary to satisfy the learning objectives.

# 7. TUTORS & STUDENTS

## 7.1 Classroom-based learning

- 7.1.1 The number of students per course shall not exceed 20, or be less than four.
- 7.1.2 When the number of students is 11-20, the course shall be run with two designated tutors, both of whom shall be present for the full duration of the course. At least one tutor shall satisfy the requirements for a lead tutor, as stated in IRCA/2000. Additional resources or trainee tutors may be used for specific activities, however the two tutors remain responsible for the entire presentation.
- 7.1.3 Where the number of students is four to 10 inclusive, the course may be run with one designated tutor who shall be present for the full duration of the course. That tutor shall satisfy the requirements for a lead tutor.

## 7.2 Self-study-based learning

Tutors who provide educational support on self-study elements of blended learning must be competent to operate any media required.

## 7.3 All courses

Tutors for this course must demonstrate the following key attributes:

- 7.3.1 Competence in training, by satisfying the tutor or lead tutor requirements as appropriate (see IRCA/2000).
- 7.3.2 Competence in auditing against ISO 22301, by demonstrating auditing competence as a currently-certificated BCMS lead auditor for lead tutors (or BCMS auditor for tutors) as described in IRCA/1012, or meeting the requirements for such certification, and maintaining audit logs and evidence of continual professional development (CPD).
- 7.3.3 Competence to deliver training **and** student assessment on your specific course.

## 8. VARIATIONS

- 8.1 Requests for variations to any of these criteria, or in respect of any special circumstances, will be considered for approval on written submission by the approved training organisation to the IRCA. Any such request shall be made immediately upon the reason for the variation request becoming apparent.
- 8.2 We will consider the following when evaluating any request for variation:
- 8.2.1 Reasons for the requested variation.
  - 8.2.2 Proposed modifications to the training.
  - 8.2.3 The impact on the learning and assessment processes and how this will be managed.

## 9. STUDENT ASSESSMENT & EXAMINATION

We regard the assessment and examination of students to be a very important part of this course.

### 9.1 Successful completion

In order to satisfactorily complete the course each student must:

- 9.1.1 Complete/attend all elements of the course.
- 9.1.2 Pass the continuous assessment (focused on the three learning objectives).
- 9.1.3 Pass the written examination (focused on the three learning objectives).

(Note: the written examination assumes students have the prior knowledge described in clause 1.2.3.)

### 9.2 Conduct and management of continuous assessment

- 9.2.1 Students must demonstrate acceptable levels of performance in all three learning objectives. During the course you must test each student's achievement of the learning objectives. These tests must be based on practical tasks and activities, with defined outputs that students must produce.
- 9.2.2 You must provide tutors with model outputs and a marking scheme/guidance to assess each student's performance and outputs.
- 9.2.3 Tutors must provide students with feedback on their performance.
- 9.2.4 Tutors must give further help and guidance to students who do not initially achieve elements of the learning objectives. They must provide these students with opportunities to complete further tasks in order to demonstrate competence.
- 9.2.5 Each student's achievement of learning objectives must be recorded on his/her continuous assessment record. (Note: see Appendices for guidance on continuous assessment.)

### 9.3 Conduct and management of the written BCMS Auditor/Lead Auditor examination

- 9.3.1 IRCA courses: students must sit one of the current issue of IRCA-set BCMS auditor/lead auditor examination papers.
- 9.3.2 IRCA examinations must be conducted in accordance with the criteria set out in IRCA/2000.
- 9.3.3 IRCA examination papers must state on every page:  
 'IRCA EXAMINATION PAPER NUMBER [X]' amended for use on approved course [xxxx] operated by [TO], [the date of issue and page number].

Please insert at X the IRCA reference number for the paper, at TO the name and IRCA certification number of your training organisation, and at xxxx the IRCA certification number of your course.

- 9.3.4 You may modify the IRCA examination papers as indicated below, but must not change the structure of the paper.
- a) Minor changes in the wording may be made to reflect local language differences
  - b) Changes in wording may be made to better reflect a specific context, eg a production or a retail application. These changes must NOT represent substantive changes to either the question or the solution
  - c) A maximum of 25% of each paper may be replaced, but this must NOT change the structure of the paper. You must NOT make changes to section 4, except to make a change of context. The NCR form may be replaced by a similar form which you routinely use
  - d) On replacing a question, you must:
    - Provide a solution and marking scheme for the alternative question
    - Send IRCA the alternative question (identifying clearly which question it is intended to replace) and its solution for approval, before it is incorporated into the IRCA examination paper.

## **10. COURSE PUBLICITY & ADVERTISING**

- 10.1 Course advertising and promotional literature shall not state or imply that this course satisfies more than the training requirements for certification as an IRCA BCMS auditor.
- 10.2 Promotional materials shall clearly state that all students are expected to have the recommended prior knowledge defined in clause 1.2.3.

## **APPENDIX 1: AUDIT BUSINESS CONTINUITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS AGAINST ISO 22301 (NORMATIVE)**

### **1. Coverage of ISO 22301**

The aim of this course is to provide students with the knowledge and skills required to perform first, second and third-party audits of business continuity management systems against ISO 22301, in accordance with ISO 19011 and ISO 17021 as applicable.

This course is designed for students who have prior knowledge of business continuity management principles and concepts, and the requirements of ISO 22301. Learning objective 2.1.1 and enabling objective 3.1 require students to apply and extend this prior knowledge in context with performing a management system audit. IRCA will accept training courses that include some coverage of the specific business continuity management-related clauses of ISO 22301, sufficient to enable students to refresh their prior knowledge. IRCA will not accept training courses designed to impart this knowledge. IRCA will not accept a clause-by-clause analysis of ISO 22301 in certified courses.

This course does require students to audit a business continuity management system against the requirements of ISO 22301, including the ability to identify audit evidence to establish conformity or nonconformity.

You should advise students that course examination questions could relate to any requirement of ISO 22301 and the recommended prior knowledge.

### **2. Auditing business continuity management system requirements**

You will need to demonstrate that your course gives students the opportunity to audit a business continuity management system, covering the full scope of ISO 22301.

IRCA require audit skills to be practised and tested through tasks, and in real or simulated audit situations. IRCA require a majority of the time available to be spent on these activities. A contiguous case study approach is often the most effective means of covering the learning objectives, particularly those relating to the auditing of the BCMS processes referenced in 3.3.3.

Tasks and simulated audits must make use of business continuity management system materials and information (documents, records etc) representative of those that auditors can expect to find in real audits of business continuity management systems, based on ISO 22301.

IRCA recognise it may not be practical for each student to audit all elements of ISO 22301. To meet the requirements of enabling objective 3.3.3 you should design audit activities so that individual and team activities collectively evaluate conformity (or otherwise) with all elements of ISO 22301.

IRCA require tasks and real or simulated audit situations to be both realistic and of sufficient complexity and duration to allow students to demonstrate, and for tutors to evaluate, achievement or otherwise of the audit skills specified in enabling objective 3.3.

## **APPENDIX 2: GUIDANCE**

### **(INFORMATIVE)**

#### **1. Meeting the learning and enabling objectives**

IRCA do not expect courses to be designed in the chronological order of the learning and enabling objectives in this document. We recognise that individual sessions within a training course can cover more than one learning or enabling objective at the same time.

#### **2. Helping students learn new knowledge & skills**

IRCA promote the use of participative-learning approaches because they are more efficient in terms of speed and depth of comprehension, and more effective in terms of long-term retention of new knowledge. Therefore, you should employ practical tasks and activities to help students understand new concepts and ideas. You should not rely on tutor-focused lecture or presentation to transfer new ideas and concepts. IRCA is unlikely to accept a training course that has a majority of slide-driven sessions or tutor-led presentations and discussions.

IRCA promote a variety of training methods in your course design. Different people learn in different ways, so your sessions should follow the learning cycle and your course should include a variety of different learning activities to cater for all needs, as far as possible. Honey and Mumford (*The Learning Styles Questionnaire*, Peter Honey Publications, ISBN 1 902899 07 5) provide one model for describing different learning styles that you may find useful as a basis.

Continuous assessment should have a clear link between the following: session plans (for tutors), clear task/activity instructions with defined and measurable outputs (for students and tutors), activity marking schemes/model answers (for tutors), model answers (for students), and individual student continuous assessment record (for recording student performance).

#### **3. Conducting real or simulated audits**

IRCA consider the use of real or simulated audits using case study materials to be an essential and major part of any Auditor/Lead Auditor training course. IRCA expect real or simulated audits to be carried out under planned and controlled conditions, where tutors provide support and guidance as appropriate, and complete student evaluation. IRCA require adequate time to be allocated to the task of conducting a real or simulated audit and will seek evidence that the time allowed is sufficient to enable students to achieve the applicable enabling objectives, as described in 3.3.2 and 3.3.3.

Where real audits are carried out, tutors should ensure all necessary arrangements needed to facilitate the audit are in place prior to the audit. Tutors should ensure, in so far as is practical, that auditees are made aware that the audit is part of the student training and evaluation process. Prior to carrying out a real audit tutors should ensure, so far as is practical, the availability of relevant management system materials and information (documents, records etc) appropriate to the scope of the audit and the management system processes referenced in 3.3.3.

Where simulated audits using case study materials are used, IRCA recommend the tutor(s) take the role of the auditee. IRCA consider it very unlikely that requiring other students to take the role of the auditee will provide an effective learning environment.

The course design should ensure that when students are not actively participating in the real or simulated audit they are engaged in other structured and directed activities, for example observing other audits, conducting audit team review meetings, preparing audit findings and audit reports, etc.

#### **4. Blended learning: course duration & tutor/student ratios**

IRCA will consider courses designed with less than 60% of the course duration devoted to classroom activity (as calculated in IRCA/2000) in circumstances where, for example, there is a smaller tutor/student ratio, for example: two tutors and a maximum of six students.

#### **5. Self-study**

IRCA recommend that you consider the following documents when developing training based on information technology solutions:

*BS 7988:2002 A code of practice for the use of information technology for the delivery of assessments*

*BS 8426:2003 A code of practice for e-support in e-learning systems*